

# Maryland Numismatist



## Maryland Innovation Dollar



***Dues are due! Renewal form page 21.  
SpringWhitman Expo has been canceled.***

**Spring, 2021 Volume 49 – No. 1**

**The  
Maryland  
State  
Numismatic  
Association,  
Inc.**



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<http://mdstatenumisassn.org>

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## President's Message



The U.S. Mint released the Maryland Innovation Dollar showing the Hubble Space Telescope in December. Unfortunately, the pandemic upsurge prevented any sort of ceremony. Joseph Menna, the chief engraver at the U.S. Mint, designed and engraved the coin, and had also designed and engraved the Ft. McHenry quarter for the America the Beautiful program. The Montgomery County Coin Club has been buying bags of these dollars and reselling them for \$1.25 each or \$30 for a roll of 25. If you are willing to come and pick them up in downtown Silver Spring, contact our editor, Simcha Kuritzky, who is also the MCCC Treasurer. He also has the rest of the innovation dollars and S Mint uncirculated America the Beautiful quarters since 2019 (40 cents each, \$15 for a roll) and Kennedy halves since 2017 (80 cents each, \$15 a roll).

The Baltimore Convention Center cancelled the Whitman Spring Expo for March 25-27. Whitman plans to host its biggest show ever on June 3-5. No word yet on whether MSNA will be able to hold the exhibit competition then or in November.

One thing to look forward to in 2021, other than being vaccinated, is the U.S. Mint release of the centennial versions of the last Morgan Dollar and the first Peace Dollar. Perhaps in 2014 we should have recommended a 50th anniversary of the last minted Peace Dollar.

The Montgomery County Coin Club had an online charity auction in December that resulted in an over \$1,000 donation for the Manna Food Bank in Gaithersburg.

## Obituaries

Karl Keller, MSNA Treasurer from 1997 to 2009, the longest anyone has served in that office so far, passed away at age 89. He had also served as treasurer for BANC and Maryland TAMS, and was a member of BCC.

Robert (Bob) Willis Ruby, MSNA President 1985 to 1987 and journal editor 2002 to 2009, passed away on January 22, 2021 at age 84. He was active with the Westminster Fire Department. He was also a past president of the Carroll County Coin Club, the Baltimore Coin Club, and the Maryland Token and Medal Society.

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- Participation as a bourse dealer at hundreds of local, regional and national coin shows and conventions
- Attendance at every major U.S. auction held since 1968, representing as many as 25 bidders at the same time
- Consultation to corporations, dealers, and collectors in order to develop, build and expand collections as well as being instrumental in the promotion of the numismatic hobby
- Recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Professional Numismatists Guild

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- Appraise collections or individual pieces on an hourly basis
- Assist in the orderly disposition of holdings at current values



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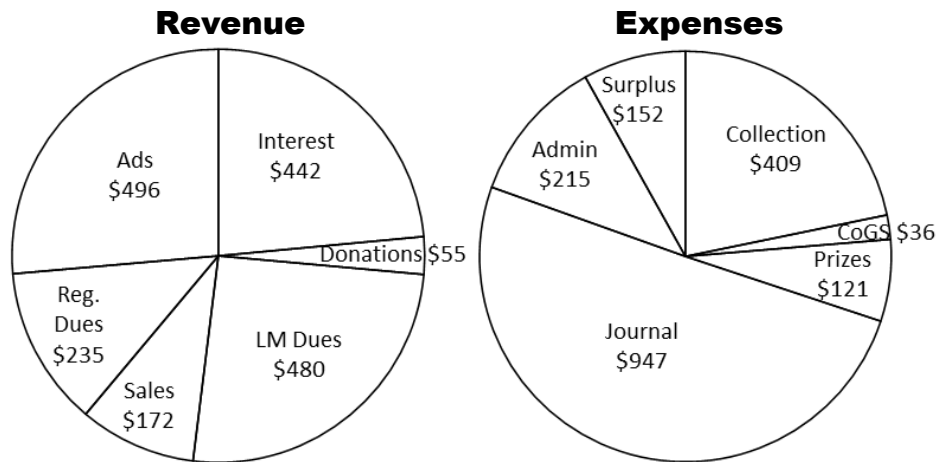
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## Treasury Notes by Simcha Kuritzky, Treasurer and Editor

Below are two pie charts that show our results for fiscal year 2020 (ended November 30). Each circle represents the same number of dollars; because we had more revenue than expense, the difference is shown as a surplus near the top of the expense pie chart.



The largest impact of using accrual versus cash basis of accounting is on life memberships—revenues earned for life membership are from payments received years ago, so regular dues and life membership dues are shown separately. No need to mention this was a year like no other. We merged the 2020 and 2021 raffles and couldn't hold the exhibit competition, so the prizes are just the cost of printing the 2020 tickets. The sales are raffle tickets and a set of the souvenir sheets. Advertising includes both in the journal and on the raffle tickets. Administrative expenses include post office box rentals and membership dues in other organizations. Expenses associated with the John Henry collection include the safe deposit box rental and insurance.

Due to the pandemic, I let a lot of the membership dues slide, but I will send out reminder postcards in March to try and bring membership back up for 2021. Please save me the trouble of contacting you by renewing before then. You can also pay by PayPal, sending the dues amount to [MontgomeryCoin@gmail.com](mailto:MontgomeryCoin@gmail.com). We have so little traffic, PayPal will let you send as friends and family for no fee, but if you use a credit card, please pay the service fee.

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## Membership Report

The MSNA by-laws require the treasurer to prepare an annual report on the membership. I am also giving the report for all years back to 2014.

MSNA has six types of membership. Regular, club and junior members must pay each year. Life, club life, and honorary life members are inducted once and stay members until they pass away, the club is dissolved, or they resign. Honorary life members become life members immediately, while regular and club life members must be a member in good standing the three years previous. So the only changes to life membership are new members and deceased members (which includes those who resign or who can no longer be reached by mail), while regular members can join, renew (which can be paid in advance or arrears), lapse, or return after a lapse of at least one year.

Our regular membership fell precipitously in 2019, and continued to decline in 2020. I am planning to issue more renewal reminders this year. Our life membership is also declining.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Regular</b>							
New	2	1	1	4	5	2	1
Renewed	41	37	31	30	32	23	17
Returned	2	1	4	4	3	0	3
Convert to life mem.	-2	-3		-3			-1
Lapsed	-7	-5	-8	-3	-6	-17	-7
Total	45	39	36	38	40	25	21

Note: Total = New + Renewed + Returned = Previous Total + New + Returned – Convert to LM – Lapsed

<b>Life</b>							
Begin	69	70	71	69	69	65	64
New	2	3		3			1
Deceased	-1	-2	-2	-3	-4	-1	-4
End	70	71	69	69	65	64	61
Combined	115	110	105	107	105	89	82



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# Maryland's Dollar and the Hubble Telescope

By Mark Benvenuto, MSNA #R-825

If you have not been keeping up with every issue of the American Innovation dollar coins, well, you are probably not alone. It can be tough to keep interest on a series of coins that appears to be some form of circulating dollar pieces, yet don't circulate. Also, we now have plenty of commemorative individual coins and series coming out, so a person trying to snag one of everything from the Mint might need a mint of their own to produce the funds needed to buy – and a mint vault to keep their collection in. Yet Maryland's turn has come for the Innovation dollar, and nothing less than the Hubble telescope is featured on the new dollar.

The Hubble can be considered an amazing telescope for what it does not have to do – meaning it does not have to look at the heavens through our atmosphere. This gives us a clearer view of the universe, lets us see more than we have ever seen before, and adds a depth to our understanding of space both near and far that we simply have not had before. And it does indeed have some connections to Maryland.

Quoting the Mint web site, the people in charge comment that:

“Developed by NASA and launched on April 24, 1990, the Hubble Space Telescope is one of the largest and most versatile space telescopes. It was named in honor of American astronomer Edwin P. Hubble. It is also the first designed to be serviced in space by astronauts. Teams at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Beltsville and the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore manage the telescope.”

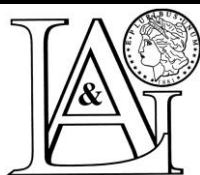
The American Innovation dollars all have a common obverse, showing the upper half of the Statue of Liberty and sporting the oft-used motto, In God We Trust, as well as the value. The reverse not only shows the image of the telescope, but states “The Hubble Space Telescope,” and has legends for both the United States of America as well as Maryland. The date, mint mark, and E Pluribus Unum are all on the edge. The reverse inscriptions are all in the Nasalization ultramodern sans serif font based on the NASA logo from 1975.

How then do we get our hands on some Maryland Innovation dollars?

Well, of course we could look through mountains of change, just to see if someone who had received one had also chosen to spend it. That may have an appeal, but the chances of landing one this way are vanishingly small. For those of us interested, the Mint is quite willing to sell us as many Maryland Innovation dollars as we want. There is no ordering limit, as of the time of this writing there isn't all that much of a mark-up for bulk purchases. The Mint charges \$34.50 for a roll of 25 (that's \$1.38 each) or \$117.50 for an entire bag of 100. Postage is only \$5 regardless of how many you buy, including other products. This is probably the surest way to land some of our new dollars. That's just for Philadelphia and Denver struck trade coins. A proof set of all 4 different innovation dollars struck in San Francisco is \$24, or a single reverse proof from San Francisco for \$11.50.

What may be the most fun for the patient collector is to see what sort of price will be attached to these dollars in a month or two, after some have been certified by the third-party grading services, and among that group a select few emerge with the coveted MS-70 grade. Will there be a ground swell of desire for the best of the best? Will one or two of these cross the auction block for an amazing price? Or will we have one more modern example of the minter's art that is considered no better or worse than many others? There's no way to know. This is truly a case of "time will tell."

Good luck to any and all of us who go after the Maryland Innovation dollar, or any of the new dollars for that matter.



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## Local News

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, most clubs have cancelled their meetings. MSNA Treasurer and Editor Simcha Kuritzky arranged Zoom meetings for two clubs.

The **Montgomery County Coin Club** raised over \$1000 in their annual charity auction for the Manna Food Bank in Gaithersburg, which this year was held on line at the Maryland Estate Treasures web site run by former MSNA President Scott Barman. At the October meeting, MSNA member Bob Eisemann gave a presentation on collecting error coins.

President **Simcha Kuritzky** talked on the World War Two ghetto currency of Lodz (Litzmannstadt) and Terezin (Theresienstadt) at the **Washington Numismatic Society** in November. In December, members talked about the best purchase they made in 2020, while in January, Simcha spoke on ancient Jewish coins and how their chronology wasn't fixed until the 1960s.

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## Two Simple Experiments

By Tom Betsock

I was sufficiently bored during the pandemic that I did a couple of fifth grade level science projects involving coins.

### Coin Storage and Gassy Wood

The first project was put together early in the pandemic. I had just made a small wooden box out of walnut and was curious as to whether I could safely store coins in it. Some experts maintain that certain woods emit gasses which can discolor valuables. In April 2020, I placed four coins--a golden dollar, a recent quarter, a recent cent, and a silver dime--in a glass jar alongside some milled walnut. The three recent coins were uncirculated, and the silver dime was in EF. The coins were set slightly apart from the wood and did not touch. To expand the experiment, four sets of these coins were also placed in jars containing purpleheart, pine, oak, and shredded PVC. The wood pieces had been milled recently and all the wood was brushed with a rasp with the idea that that would stir up gasses. Purpleheart, pine and walnut are all thought be “gassy” woods.

The five jars were sealed and stored in a non-airconditioned and unheated building. When they were opened in January 2021, all twenty coins



showed no change. There was no toning or spots, not even on the cents. I was especially surprised that the purple heart wood sample had no effect, given that purple heart takes a long time to dry.

I may repeat this experiment using one wood and several different finishes. A set of coins is shown on a piece of tigerwood, a beautiful but expensive import.

### Ice and Coins

The second experiment was to test the idea that the metals used in a coin melt ice at different rates. Silver should melt ice faster than most metals because it conducts heat better, and that this could be useful to detect counterfeits. Perhaps this was posited by the same experts that warned of gassy woods. I placed identical pieces of ice of  $1\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{3}{4} \times \frac{1}{2}$  inches atop

the coins of approximately crown size. Large coins were used so the ice would not slide off. I did not have a large steel coin, so I stacked four 1943 cents atop four other such cents. The weight is about the same as a crown coin, and the zinc coating was probably worn down on these old cents. The coins were all tested in the same place, at the same time.

Metal / Coin	Minutes until melted
Steel 1943 cents	44
Silver 1923 peace dollar	46
Copper 1807 Austria 50 kreutzer	46
Cupronickel 1965 churchill crown	54
Clad 1972 Eisenhower dollar	61
Aluminum Hungary 5 pengo	64

It surprised me that the steel cents “won” this contest. Steel is not supposed to be that conductive. I’ll try to acquire a large steel medal or coin to verify the results. Silver did melt ice faster than cupronickel, which might be the most likely metal for plausible counterfeits, but not by a lot. My conclusion is that, if one is offered a beautiful 1720 thaler at a bargain price, one should rely on seller reputation, looks, sound, weight, diameter, and a magnet more than the ice test.

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## PAN Show Results



MSNA Editor and Treasurer Simcha Kuritzky spoke on polygon coins at the Pennsylvania Association of Numismatists (PAN) show, held at the end of October, during the very brief window when large though socially-distanced gatherings were allowed.



MSNA Secretary Bryce Doxzon's exhibit *They Also Ran: Select 19<sup>th</sup> Century Political Medals of the Defeated Presidential Candidates* won judges' favorite at the PAN show. Because of the pandemic, judges were not allowed to confer so the exhibits were not judged in the normal fashion. Each judge picked a first and second place privately, and the results were tallied.



Here Bryce receives a certificate and thank you 2020 silver eagle from PAN Exhibits Chairman and MSNA life member Tom Corey. All exhibitors receive a silver eagle consolation prize if they don't win something more substantial—another reason to consider exhibiting at PAN if they hold their show in May!



## What's Your Sign?

Part Forty-Seven: Russian Medals and Belarus Coins

by Simcha Kuritzky, NLG

Back in Part 41, I described three sets of medals I was told were Russian. I later came across these 27.8g 39.5mm copper medals in Russian.





Each obverse shows the sign with a sigil, dates in the European fashion (month in Roman numerals), and both sign name and Russia in Latin and Cyrillic. The names are the same as those on the medals from Part 41, but the dates are slightly different. Four stars separate the inscriptions on either side. The images of the signs are close to traditional renderings.

Zodiac Sign	Russian Name	Dates
♈ Aries	ОВЕН (Oven)	Mar 21 – Apr 20
♉ Taurus	ТЕЛЕЦ (Telets)	Apr 21 – May 20
♊ Gemini	БЛИЗНЕЦЫ (Bliznetsy)	May 21 – June 21
♋ Cancer	РАК (Rak)	June 22 – July 22
♌ Leo	ЛЕВ (Lev)	July 23 – Aug 23
♍ Virgo	ДЕВА (Deva)	Aug 24 – Sept 23
♎ Libra	ВЕСЫ (Vesy)	Sept 24 – Oct 23
♏ Scorpio	СКОРПИОН (Skorpion)	Oct 24 – Nov 22
♐ Sagittarius	СТРЕЛЕЦ (Strelets)	Nov 23 – Dec 21
♑ Capricorn	КОЗЕРОГ (Kozerog)	Dec 22 – Jan 20
♒ Aquarius	ВОДОЛЕЙ (Vodoley)	Jan 21 – Feb 20
♓ Pisces	РЫБЫ (Ryby)	Feb 21 – Mar 20



The common reverse shows a cartoon sun/moon combination with stars between, the date 2014 beneath, and around are the 12 zodiac sigils, starting at one o'clock with Aries and continuing clockwise in standard sequence. This design is similar to the reverses of the 2009 zodiac series of coins by Belarus.



Belarus issued a series of zodiac-themed coins dated 2009. The rubles are 32mm 13.16g copper-nickel, 20 rubles are 38.6mm 28.28g Sterling silver with Swarovski crystals, and the 100 rubles are 30mm 15.5g .900 fine gold. The common reverse has the Cyrillic legend Republic Belarus around the top and the denomination at bottom, with a tiny date and fineness. The center is like the

medals above, but the zodiac sign name and sigil appears instead of the date. These were made at the Warsaw, Poland Mint.



The obverse designs look nothing like the medal series. They have child-like figures and intricate designs repeated throughout the background. Crystals are used for the eyes of the figures, as well as the top center of the balance scales for Libra, on the 20 rubles only. Most notable about the designs are: Capricorn appears as a really fat goat and not goat-fish, the Libra holds a sun and moon in its scales, Sagittarius looks like a cherub with wings and a gown and not as a centaur, Virgo holds a teddy bear and flower, and Aquarius is taking a shower in a bathtub surrounded by various baby toys and supplies.



Belarus issued a series with a completely different design in 2013-15. There are two denominations: rubles in 37mm 19.5g copper-nickel, and 20 rubles in 38.6mm 28.28g sterling silver. Only the 20 rubles have Swarovski crystals but they are imbedded in the background. The only obverse inscription is the sign's Latin name on a scroll.





The common reverse has the same outside, with the country name, denomination, tiny date, fineness, and tiny country coat of arms. In the center of a serrated shield is a radiant sun face partially eclipsed by a crescent moon face looking down and right. Surrounding them are stars and foliage.

**ANNAPOLIS COIN and CURRENCY SHOW**

**Elks Lodge #622, 2 Pythian Drive,  
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**2021**

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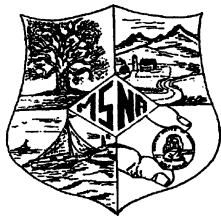
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## **Membership Application/Renewal**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ MSNA #: \_\_\_\_\_ (for renewal)

I hereby apply for membership/renewal in the Maryland State Numismatic Association, Inc., subject to its constitution & by-laws. (Please Print)

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Other Numismatic Affiliations: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor No. 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor No. 2: \_\_\_\_\_

For junior membership please include:

Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Fee of \$15 (club), \$10 (individual) or \$2 (under 18) must accompany this form for calendar year dues (\$5 individual after August 1). Life member upgrades are: \$300 for clubs, \$200 (age 50 & under), \$125 (51-65), \$75 (66 & over). You must be a regular member for 3 years before attaining life membership. Pay by check or money order.

# Maryland Coin Show Dates

All shows have free admission. Only the Whitman show does not have free parking. All shows are subject to cancellation due to the pandemic; check before going.

**27-28 Feb. – Frederick Coin and Currency Show**, Elk Lodge #684, 289 Willowdale Drive, Frederick, MD; 9-4:30.

**7 Mar. – Annapolis Coin and Currency Show**, Elks Lodge #622, 2 Pythian Drive, Edgewater, MD; 9-4.

**14 Mar. – Hunt Valley Coin and Currency Show**, Holiday Inn, 9615 Deereco Road, Lutherville-Timonium, MD; 9-4.

**17-18 Apr. – Frederick Coin and Currency Show**, Elk Lodge #684, 289 Willowdale Drive, Frederick, MD; 9-4:30.

**17 Apr. – Baltimore Stamp & Coin Show**, Maryland State Fair Grounds, Mosner Miller Bldg, 2200 York Road, Timonium, MD; 9-4.

**2 May – Hunt Valley Coin and Currency Show**, Holiday Inn, 9615 Deereco Road, Lutherville-Timonium, MD; 9-4.

**16 May – Annapolis Coin and Currency Show**, Elks Lodge #622, 2 Pythian Drive, Edgewater, MD; 9-4.

**29-30 May – Frederick Coin and Currency Show**, Elk Lodge #684, 289 Willowdale Drive, Frederick, MD; 9-4:30.

**19 June – Baltimore Stamp & Coin Show**, Maryland State Fair Grounds, Mosner Miller Bldg, 2200 York Road, Timonium, MD; 9-4.

**18-20 June – Whitman Baltimore Summer Expo**, Baltimore Convention Center, 1 West Pratt Street; Thu 2-6, Fri-Sat 10-6.

**14 Aug.–Baltimore Stamp & Coin Show**, Maryland State Fair Grounds, Mosner Miller Building, 2200 York Road, Timonium, Md; 9-4.

**12 Sept. – Annapolis Coin and Currency Show**, Elks Lodge #622, 2 Pythian Drive, Edgewater, MD; 9-4.

**1-3 Oct. – CEO Coins, Currency & Treasures Ocean City Show**, Ocean City (Roland E. Powell) Convention Center, 4001 Ocean Highway & 40<sup>th</sup> Street, Ocean City, MD; Fri. 9-5, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4.

**16 Oct. – Baltimore Stamp & Coin Show**, Maryland State Fair Grounds, Mosner Miller Building, 2200 York Road, Timonium, Md; 9-4.

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